forcing acknowledgement that the Vulcan's cock was steel hard between them. He saw the fire flare for a moment, the desire tremble on Spock's lips.

"It is--enough--to please you."

"You have. You do, very much. That wasn't what I asked." He squirmed against Spock, and the Vulcan's hands tightened on his arms to hold him still.

"You cannot wish--" images of pain wheeled in Spock's mind, fought with desire. "I should--"

Kirk silenced him with a kiss and wiggled free to turn on his stomach. There was a silence once again, and then Spock's hands, lifting him, parting him. The sweet, stinging liquor of Spock's mouth bathing him, Spock's tongue teasing, circling, Spock's cock touching him, hesitating, then slowly, slowly forcing in. There was pain, not enough, and Spock's hands squeezed his ass hard as it peaked, and then only exquisite, exquisite joining, a long slow slide of pleasure he wanted inside him forever Who would have thought so much pleasure possible, Spock impaling him on that acorn-green cock?

Kirk didn't want to shower and dress, but Spock, regaining some sense of his responsibilities, insisted that they go and eat. When they walked briskly (and artificially) into the empty rec room, it was 1400, an hour into second shift. Kirk sat lazily and let Spock choose for both of them, but when he saw the contents of his tray, he glanced up wickedly through his lashes.

"Trying to build me up?"

"They are highly nutritious," Spock said with dignity as he began on his salad, but a slight flush betrayed him. He knew the significance humans attached to oysters.

Kirk enjoyed his meal, but he felt restless. Part of him wanted to be up and doing. The ship felt small, familiar. He wanted his exotic mate beside him in exotic places and high endeavors. A second part of him resented the slight feeling of invisibility it gave him to be off the duty roster, to have the ship functioning without him. And all of him, shamelessly, wanted to be back in the privacy of Spock's room.

"What do I get for dessert?" he asked suggestively, watching as Spock's color betrayed him again. The Vulcan had prudently taken a place with his back to the room, but even from that view, the tips of his ears must have been suspiciously green.

"Surely you have some suggestion, Mr. Spock," Kirk goaded, watching the way Spock's eyes narrowed and his lips parted on an indrawn breath, "as the science officer of a starship, you should be able to rise to the occasion." He was teasing, and not teasing, playing with fire and he loved it. Just to see Spock's response started the sensation, spiraling into being in his center, a gathering brightness like a new-formed nebula. "What would you like?"

Spock raised his eyes, accepting the challenge, letting his fire show.

"I prefer to make my suggestions in private, Captain, if you're ready."

But McCoy looked in as they were leaving the table, oblivious of his bad timing.

"There you are, Jim. The chaplain says that the Guthrie custom is burial on the field of battle. He's requested that the ship drop warp speed to eject Dray's body. Scotty wanted your permission."

The gathering fire inside Kirk shrank, an insignificant sparkle in the deeps of space. Dray, who had bought them this joy.

"We owe him that. When do they want to do it?"

"We're ready now. I thought you would want to attend." McCoy looked questioningly at Spock, who had previously avoided participation in religious ceremonies.

"He saved our lives, Doctor. I would be honored to attend."

It wasn't much of a ceremony, cramped into the airlock adjacent to the shuttlebay. Uhura and Sunderson and Nadia were there. McCoy trailed Spock and Kirk into the room where they spaced themselves around the aluminum coffin. The cover was closed, but it hinged on one side, and the bolts on the other weren't dogged. There were several officers and crewmembers who officiated for various faiths, so Kirk wasn't surprised to see Lapsley enter and take up a place at the head of coffin.

"I'm not sure what faith Dray was, if any, but I am an ordained minister in the Chruch of the Second Dispersal, and I'm authorized to conduct services for any faith for the term of my enlistment. If there are no objections and no one better qualified, I will conduct a memorial service for Dray T'serek."

There were no objections, and Lapsley took a small red book out of his waistband.

"This is the Guthrie Book of Battle, a manual of arms from their dark ages before they rediscovered space flight, back when they fought with swords and spears. It teaches a young warrior how to care for his body and his weapons, how to do his duty and defend his honor. I found it in Dray's effects, and I think the instructions it gives for those fallen in battle would be appropriate for Dray."

He opened the book to a marked page and cleared his throat.

> "Many fall in battle and are slain. Them we honor in our hearts, friend and foe alike. They are our comrades who go before us. When men die in peace, there are many to mourn, but in battle friends may be afar off or hard pressed by their enemies, and it touches the honor of the fallen to release their friends of obligation.
>
> "Therefore the fallen are the friends of all and all the fallen are friends of thine. Give them peace with a good heart as you would your dearest, to spare him pain, and close their eyes, and bare their breasts that all may see their wounds were before them. If you know good of them, speak it and pass on.
>
> "Do this and no more, for duty is to life. Honor lives in the heart, not the flesh that fails. Do this and no more, for earth is easy to the fallen and night covers them."